

2010 Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Service



Awards Ceremony and Reception

Governor's Mansion
Frankfort, Kentucky

Thursday, June 2, 2011

Awards Ceremony at 2 p.m. EST
Reception immediately following

Your host

The Kentucky Commission on Community
Volunteerism and Service

Welcome

Welcome to the 2010 Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Service presentation and celebration.

Now in its 16th year under the direction of the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS), the awards program offers a rare glimpse into the lives and achievements of Kentuckians who serve without expectation of compensation, recognition or commendation.

It's been our distinct privilege over the years to recognize a few of the thousands whose volunteer service contributes immeasurably to a better Kentucky.

We're so glad you're here to join us in honoring the latest Governor's Volunteer Awards recipients.

Schedule of Events

Welcome:

- Aaron Anderkin, Chairman, Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service

Opening Remarks:

- Janie Miller, Secretary, Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Award Presentations:

- Jane Beshear, Kentucky's First Lady
- Colmon Elridge, Executive Assistant to the Governor

Closing:

- Mrs. Jane Beshear

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

~ John F. Kennedy



The Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS) administers Kentucky's AmeriCorps national service programs. The Commission is a statewide, bipartisan group comprised of 25 members, appointed by the governor, with diverse service and volunteerism backgrounds.

The KCCVS actively engages citizens in community service opportunities that enable volunteers, organizations and businesses to share ideas and effectively collaborate to address Kentucky's needs.

The KCCVS hosts a number of annual statewide activities designed to encourage volunteer and service program development. The KCCVS' funding is provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Kentucky General Assembly.

For more information about national service, volunteerism and the KCCVS, please go to www.volunteerKY.ky.gov.

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Mysti White
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2010 Make A Difference Day Award Recipients



Make A Difference Day is observed the fourth Saturday in October. The KCCVS traditionally sponsors a campaign to collect as much nonperishable food items as possible as part of its observance. Collected food is donated to food pantries in the communities where the food is collected.



KCCVS hosts one food drive competition involving our Kentucky AmeriCorps programs and another among Cabinet for Health and Family Services' community-based service regions.

The Make A Difference Day Awards are traveling awards, meaning the award is presented to and remains with the winning program or regional office for one year, then travels to the next year's winning program and region.

Kentucky's 2010 Make A Difference Day Food Drive yielded 85.61 tons of food - collected and distributed to local food banks! See pictures from the 2010 project at <http://tinyurl.com/2010maddpics>.

Make a Difference Day: AmeriCorps Program



ATEAM AmeriCorps Program's 65 members collected 1,506,516 ounces or 47 tons of food. That equates to 23,177 ounces of food per AmeriCorps member and allows area food banks to feed 188,315 Kentuckians.

Shannon Bailes and Donna Brown are the program directors for Barren County Board of Education's ATEAM AmeriCorps program.

Make A Difference Day: DCBS Region



The Lakes Service Region's 408 employees collected 38,401 ounces of food. That equates to 94 ounces of food per employee, enabling food banks to feed 4,800 Kentuckians.

Renee Buckingham is the Service Region Administrator.

Lindsey Wilson College Bonner Leaders, Group Youth Volunteer Service Award



Columbia/Adair County

Nominated by Amy Thompson-Wells

Adair County has a poverty rate of 23.4 percent. Almost half of its adult population over the age of 25 did not graduate from high school and less than

12 percent of the adult population has a college degree. The Lindsey Wilson College Bonner Leaders assist in literacy programs, tutoring and mentoring, and various other national service events to raise awareness of issues such as poverty, education and the environment. The Bonner Leader program distinguishes Lindsey Wilson as a college committed to improving its community. The program educates students through engagement in ongoing service-learning projects.

In 2005, when the Bonner Leader program started, there were eight students involved – now there are 56 students in the program. Each student commits to perform 215-300 hours of service for the academic year, although some students have put in over 1,000 hours in the Adair County community – over four times the required amount.

In 2007, the Bonner Leader program won the statewide Bridges Over Barrier Best Partner Non-Profit Award for exceptional contribution and commitment to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers and the students they serve.

One example of how this program has impacted the community is the continuation of the Camp Casey afterschool program. Due to loss of grant funding, the program faced closure. However, the Bonner Leader program provided 16-22 volunteers who pledged 10 hours a week to continue the camp.

Currently, the Bonner Leader program has 15 community partner sites where students commit to six-10 hours of service weekly. Now, the first phone call made when people in the community need volunteers is to the Bonner Leaders.

"The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others."

~ DeAnn Hollis

United Parcel Service (UPS), Corporate Award



Louisville/Jefferson County
Nominated by Ruthe P. Holmberg

Seven years ago, United Parcel Service (UPS) partnered with Adventure Camp, the outdoor component of the Boy Scout's Scouting Unlimited program for students in the public schools with emotional, physical, mental, behavioral and learning challenges. Activities at the twice-yearly camp include boating, music and dance therapy, rafting, canoeing, fishing, arts and crafts, archery and marksmanship.

The 2010 spring camp brought in 1,600 students and the fall camp hosted 1,300 young people – record attendance for Adventure Camp. Each year UPS has allowed their employees to take a day to volunteer at Adventure Camp. This year 72 volunteers served 1,612 hours at the two camps, with many of the volunteers serving at both camps. Volunteers assist in individual classrooms, clean the dining hall, help with waterfront, archery and marksmanship activities. Volunteering is always done with a smile and a friendly word of encouragement for the students.

As the camp attendance has increased, the number of UPS volunteers has increased to match. The increased attendance created the need for additional volunteers to assist at each activity and in other areas. At the conclusion of one camp, four camp staff began the daunting task of clean up. Several of the UPS volunteers pitched in and the job was done in half the time. With each camp since, UPS volunteers took it upon themselves to organize a Friday cleanup crew to assist with tearing down camp.

Scouting Unlimited District Executive Ruthe Holmberg says that Adventure Camp could not be held without the volunteers from UPS. As a result of UPS's involvement and leadership at the camp, other companies have followed suit.

Disciples for Habitat, Faith-Based Group Award



Lexington/Fayette County
Nominated by Rob Turner

Lexington Habitat for Humanity's mission is to provide simple, decent and affordable housing in partnerships with low-income families in need. This mission can only be achieved with the support of volunteer groups like the Disciples for Habitat (DFH) that consist of dozens of Lexington Disciples

of Christ Church congregations. Hundreds of members of the DFH group performed approximately 2,000 hours of construction volunteer service on their sponsored home in 2010, literally building it – alongside the future homeowner family – from the ground up.

The DFH group have sponsored 23 homes over the past 20 years, and they took a lead volunteer role in two other homes.

While the DFH's visible, concrete volunteer service of building a home is highly impressive in and of itself, the approach the group takes to meeting the needs of the community is even more remarkable. In addition to actually building homes, the DFH members volunteer year-round to ensure that finances are on track for their Habitat homes. Through fundraising efforts that include the partner families, the DFH's approach not only raises funds necessary to build Habitat homes, but also fosters community relationships – all while educating people about the need for quality, affordable housing.

Helping Hands of Trigg County, Nonprofit Organization Award



Cadiz/Trigg County
Nominated by Brenda Southwick

A group determined to serve the citizens of Cadiz and Trigg County formed Helping Hands in 1997. When large companies closed in the area, resulting in the counties' unemployment rate jumping almost 12 percent, the demand for help would have been overwhelming if not for Helping Hands. The organization grew and expanded to meet the needs of the community.

Parents could no longer feed their children, buy clothes for school or meet medical needs since they no longer had insurance, and little to no income. Helping Hands sprang into action to help end panic and despair. Many of the families didn't qualify for any type of assistance but were still struggling to survive. They pay utility bills, provide food and clothing, assist with school expenses, help pay for prescriptions and other living necessities.

The organization also helps the elderly in need, starting programs such as the Over 60 Food Program. Helping Hands members wrote grants, sought other resources and held many fundraisers in order to meet the increased need. Helping Hands holds annual fundraisers such as bake sales and yard sales to fulfill their mission.

Helping Hands also works closely with the local American Red Cross to meet community needs before, during and after disasters. They partner with Lighthouse Family Resource Center and the Little River Baptist Association on the backpack program, providing backpacks full of food for 65 students in need each week. They also wrote grants and partnered with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and the local school district on projects and events for the backpack program.

Many families and individuals who have been helped by the organization come back and volunteer with Helping Hands – giving back – to support the group that gave so much to them.

Hannah Rae Mael, National Service Award



Louisville/Jefferson County
Nominated by Mara Maldonado

Jefferson County is experiencing a significant growth in Hispanic/Latino population, many of whom lack the financial and educational resources and support systems needed to succeed. Adelante Hispanic Achievers is a nonprofit, volunteer-based organization that addresses those needs by providing educational programs and resources to at-risk and underserved Hispanic/Latino middle and high school students and their families.

Hannah Rae Mael is Adelante's AmeriCorps VISTA member and serves as volunteer coordinator, community liaison and program assistant. She revitalized their volunteer recruitment, training and tracking; doubled their volunteer base; restructured and added new programs; applied for and secured funding to support additional future activity; created new partnerships and honed in on the most critical element - real, personal connections with each of Adelante's 75 students and parents.

Hannah's impact at Adelante includes co-writing three grants that were all fully funded for a total of \$25,980; initiating and implementing four new programs; doubling the volunteer base to 45 volunteers that provided over 1,600 volunteer hours to students; recruiting an ACT coach and assistant coach, activities leaders, and video leader; and translating Jefferson County Public School's Parent Portal Frequently Asked Questions webpages into Spanish. Hannah also developed partnerships with numerous local organizations.

The four programs Hannah created recognize students' potential, raise their academic levels and support their personal and social growth. Hannah takes the initiative – she doesn't wait to be assigned a task; she observes, researches, shares her ideas and moves forward.

Edwin "Sy" Sybolt, Senior Volunteer Service Award



Florence/Boone County
Nominated by Dare R. Miller

A required component of hospice care is that a portion of the care must be delivered by volunteers. For many people, working with the terminally ill and dying is a frightening and impossible situation. For some, though, it's a mission, a distinct calling. No one should have to die alone, and Edwin "Sy" Sybolt is one of those people who does his best

to ensure that doesn't happen.

He sees his regular roster of Hospice of the Bluegrass patients on a weekly basis, and he's always available to help out in an 11th hour case where a patient without friends or family is actively dying. Volunteers like Sy are scheduled in 2-3 hour increments, around-the-clock to be sure the patient has someone there – whether it is 3 p.m. or 3 a.m.

Hospice patient care volunteering is a one-on-one relationship. It's personal; it's intimate; and it's often difficult when the disease is one that ravages the body and soul of a person. It takes a special human being to sit with a patient that suffers from diseases that are not prone to peaceful Hollywood-type endings. Sy is the best of what community offers - support, camaraderie, caring, friendship and humanity. Most of the community doesn't know about what Sy does, because of confidentiality requirements. However, he speaks for the community through his service. Sy is the guy who is around when you really need him. For instance, once with an 11th hour patient, Sy came in to volunteer, talking quietly about normal things. For most of the world, this man was dying – for Sy this man was still living.

Sy not only provides patient care, but also input at the Hospice of the Bluegrass advisory board meetings and helps with fundraisers. He knows what life and death mean, and he faces their realities in a very meaningful way on a regular basis.

"Volunteerism is the voice of the people put into action. These actions shape and mold the present into a future of which we can all be proud."

~ Helen Dyer

Jim Garrett, Volunteer Coordinator Award



Frankfort/Franklin County
Nominated by John Heltzel

As the Kentucky Emergency Management Volunteer Program Coordinator, Jim Garrett has made a profound impact on the capacity of Kentucky communities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from catastrophic disasters. Jim has developed a nationwide reputation as one of the country's most effective coordinator of volunteer activities, such as establishing the National Donations Management System for the Commonwealth. He is one of only three full-time volunteer coordinators in the nation.

Within the last three years, Kentucky has experienced eight presidential disaster declarations. Orchestrating and organizing the efforts of volunteer groups from across the nation, Jim ensured comfort and relief to thousands of Kentuckians. In 2010, he organized 650 volunteers who assisted with the long-term recovery efforts in Jefferson County from the 2009 flood. Volunteers served a total of 58,000 hours – cleaning, removing debris and rehabilitating 1,297 homes. He also organized volunteer efforts for two presidentially-declared disasters which affected 89 counties in the Commonwealth. His efforts included oversight of volunteer disaster relief organizations, local recovery committees and private sector partners.

Because of Jim's efforts, new Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs) have been established in Warren, Daviess, Jefferson and Madison counties to enable those communities to better respond to the immediate recovery needs created by local emergencies and disaster events. Jim also assisted with the creation of a Disaster Response Team and ministry at the Southeast Christian Church in Louisville. Additionally, he coordinated the establishment of Long-Term Recovery Committees (LTRCs) in Owsley, Breathitt and Pike counties to assist disaster survivors with unmet needs which linger for extended periods of time after disasters. He also assisted the United Methodist Disaster Case Management to train case managers to work with community LTRCs.

He never asks any volunteer to perform services that he is not willing to do himself. Jim is a tremendous example of selfless service, whether in his paid position or his private life.

Ryan Worthen, Volunteer Service Award



Lexington/Fayette County
Nominated by Kelly Hamilton

As an employee of Kentucky Employers Mutual Insurance Company (KEMI), Ryan visited the Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) of the Bluegrass to learn about the organization and take pictures of a sponsorship reception. While at RMHC, Ryan learned about the need for a

Webmaster and offered his services. He has since returned with colleagues to provide dinners, served as videographer/director on several public service announcements (PSA), joined the board of directors as community and public relations chairperson, and is currently assisting in the creation of a new group for young professionals called the Bluegrass Red Shoe Society.

Ryan has helped lead RMHC of the Bluegrass into the world of social networking and other electronic forms of communication that have not only broadened an audience of potential new friends and supporters, but has saved the organization a great deal of money. He designed their YouTube channel and is currently working on the development of a Social Media Best Practices Guide for the charity to follow.

He also volunteers with God's Pantry and other organizations through KEMI and his own video/electronic media company, That One Company. Ryan serves as not only a valuable point of contact for community outreach, but also as a creator and manager of several projects, including a very successful PSA volunteer recruitment video featuring University of Kentucky Women's Basketball Coach Matt Mitchell.

The RMHC Charities Global Organization recently rebranded its website and asked that all associated chapters meet the same standards. Ryan was instrumental in getting the local website to meet those standards. In fact, the RMHC of the Bluegrass was used as an example of how it should be done. Furthermore, he has undertaken many seemingly small tasks that save time and money, such as the development of a survey and calendar for volunteers.

"Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience and just plain love for another."

~ Erma Bombeck

Rachel Sawyers, Youth Volunteer Service Award



Albany/Clinton County
Nominated by Lisa Leslie

Rachel Sawyers set up her first lemonade stand in 2006 when she was only four years old. She and a friend sold lemonade in Rachel's grandmother's yard during the US-127 yard sale. They told a Clinton County newspaper reporter that they planned on buying a new playhouse with the money earned. However, during the following year, Rachel saw the St. Jude's commercial and decided to have another lemonade stand the following summer with all proceeds going to St. Jude Children's Hospital. Rachel's lemonade stand became an annual event during the 127 yard sale weekend. As a regular donor to St. Jude, she receives their newsletter. And in 2009, Rachel read about a girl who raised \$1,000 at a lemonade stand to purchase a brick for the Pathway of Hope at St. Jude. Therefore, Rachel set her goal at \$1,000 for her 2009 lemonade stand.

Her strengths are her passion and faith that she will reach her goals. She always talks about how the money she raises will help sick children get well. Rachel's persistence paid off. She reached her goal in 2009 and immediately began planning for 2010.

Again, Rachel surpassed her \$1,000 goal raising \$1,164.18 and purchased her second brick for the Pathway of Hope at St. Jude. Now 9-year-old Rachel will travel to Memphis again in the fall of 2011 for the dedication of her second brick.

Tom Stokes, Challenge Award



Shepherdsville/Bullitt County
Nominated by Ruthe P. Holmberg

Over 20 years ago, at the age of 33, Tom Stokes suffered a spinal cord injury that left him a paraplegic. While many would bury themselves in self-pity, Tom decided to reach out to others with physical disabilities. He and a friend started the Adaptive Rowing Program for adults and teens with disabilities – which he continues to assist with today. He began a disabilities mission committee at his church, Beulah Presbyterian in Louisville, working to make the church more accessible as well as educate the congregation and community about disabilities inclusion and accessibility.

For the last 15 years, Tom has served as the head chef for more than 100 volunteers at Adventure Camp, the outdoor component of the Boy Scout's Scouting Unlimited program for students in the public schools with emotional, physical, mental, behavioral and learning challenges. Not only does Tom serve up a mean pot of chili, he also serves as a role model for students, showing that a disability should never keep you down. Once Tom even showed up to volunteer at the camp with a broken leg – with his cast, wheelchair and bright smile.

Tom's enthusiasm for life and positive attitude are contagious. He reaches out to others, meeting the needs of the community one person at a time. Tom also has volunteered at Frazier Rehab and the Southern Indiana Rehab Center. He and his wife, Sheryl, have invited countless people to come to their home in Shepherdsville to see how they've equipped it to accommodate Tom's wheelchair and other needs. He's even evaluated new sites to make sure they are accessible and most recently served on the YUM Center inspection team.

Jana Buxton, Challenge Award



Frankfort/Franklin County
Nominated by Doris Thurber

The Franklin County Women's Shelter (FCWS) is an emergency and transitional living shelter for homeless women and children ages 12 and older. FCWS has paid staff during office hours, but relies solely on house volunteers from 5-9 p.m. each weeknight, all weekend and overnight every night of the week. The staff also depends on volunteers during office hours to help staff carry out the day-to-day running of the facility.

Jana Buxton has been an instrumental volunteer at FCWS for two years. She is a house volunteer, regularly scheduled office-volunteer, hotline volunteer and helps with special events or needs such as sorting donated food. Jana served almost 1,000 volunteer hours in 2010. Jana is also willing to fill in scheduling gaps on a moment's notice, along with her previously scheduled shifts. During one particularly hard month when FCWS was short one office staff member, Jana continued with her previously scheduled evening and overnight shifts and helped out in the office. Jana is knowledgeable in office procedures and is also a trained counselor.

She has a gentle, respectful approach to people, no matter their situation or walk of life. She has proven to be an excellent mediator between staff and residents. She is sympathetic without allowing herself to be exploited.

Due to multiple sclerosis, Jana is unable to drive; yet her desire to volunteer encouraged the staff to work together to provide her transportation to and from FCWS. She is able and willing to work within her own physical limitations to offer excellent insights and to share her vast capabilities and talents with the staff and residents.

Patriot Guard Riders of Kentucky, Group Volunteer Service Award



Radcliff/Hardin County

Nominated by Major General Edward Tonini

The mission of the Patriot Guard Riders nationwide is to attend the funeral services of fallen American heroes. As invited guests of the family, they demonstrate sincere respect and shield participants from interruptions created

by possible protestors.

In 2010, more than 1,400 members of the Patriot Guard Riders of Kentucky (PGRKY) supported four farewell ceremonies for Active Duty, Guard and Reserve units deploying overseas, nine welcome home ceremonies for units returning home, 75 funeral services for service members, five World War II flights and two memorials. This volume of assistance not only demonstrates a considerable organizational accomplishment, but also indicates their desire to help service members and their families. PGRKY also responded to community requests to support the Hooray for Hero's event and Some Gave All Rally at Fort Knox and the Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home at both Fort Knox and Fort Campbell. Their actions provide solid examples of honor, selfless service and dedication.

During the group's September 2010 annual conference, the PGRKY honored Dan and Sandy Graham, the parents of fallen soldier Kevin Graham, who was killed in the line of duty while deployed to Afghanistan. After serving in memorial services for Kevin, the Patriot Guard promised to attend an event planned by Dan Graham called "Kevin's Krooze." This event doubled as a memorial to Kevin and a fundraiser for the Fisher House, an organization that assists wounded warriors and their families. Not only did PGRKY members participate in "Kevin's Krooze," they also presented Kevin's parents with a hand-carved plaque. Knowing someone will be there during troubled times is a comforting thought, and that is what the Patriot Guard Riders of Kentucky are all about.

Thomas Schoolmaster, First Lady's Award



Winchester/Clark County
Nominated by Anita Bartley

This year, a special, First Lady's Award was added to honor a Kentuckian that has gone the extra mile to assist youth at-risk of dropping out of high school and complements Mrs. Beshear's Graduate Kentucky initiative.

For years, Tom Schoolmaster has dedicated his time to helping at-risk students become more accountable for their choices and behaviors. He tutors students who have dropped out of school and are working toward their General Education Diploma (GED) as well as with math students attending the Clark County Day Treatment Program (CCDTP). Tom also assists CCDTP students with writing resumes and for some, speaks on their behalf to management to help them secure employment. He also mentors students who come by his business, Schoolmasters' Bakery, after school and has even allowed some to complete their community service requirements there.

Students that have worked with Tom have improved their math scores, graduated high school, earned GEDs and/or found employment. Students have also attributed his mentoring to helping them make positive choices instead of negative ones that could have led to incarceration in a juvenile detention center.

In addition, Tom offers assistance whenever asked by CCDTP staff or one of its students. He has spread his enthusiasm for this at-risk population with fellow business owners and political figures in the community. He believes youth need structure, consequences, encouragement, respect, positive role models and to realize their worth as an individual. It seems many adults are reluctant to get involved with at-risk youth; this lends more value to Tom's willingness to volunteer his time and energy hoping to make a difference in the life of at-risk students.

"Start where you are. Distant fields always look greener, but opportunity lies right where you are. Take advantage of every opportunity of service."

~ Robert Collier

Bill Burch, Lifetime Achievement Award



Ashland/Boyd County
Nominated by Janet Wentte

As a retired elementary school principal, Bill Burch knows firsthand how the power of book ownership positively impacts a child's life. This knowledge, along with research that 61 percent of low-income families have no books at home for their children, led him to develop the First Book-Boyd County Board (FBBCB). The board provides new books to children in need through local schools and existing literacy programs by raising funds locally and awarding book grants to the most effective programs.

Bill's steadfast leadership, organizational skills and boundless energy allowed the FBBCB to flourish and become a model advisory board. In his seven years as director of FBBCB, the board has raised more than \$75,000 in donations to provide new books.

In addition, he coordinated local efforts to help the commonwealth win the national First Book's "What Book Got You Hooked" contest, resulting in 50,000 free books for low-income children across the state. Bill has also helped start several local First Book chapters.

He loves to attend FBBCB distribution events, where he often receives positive feedback about the program. For example, one FBBCB recipient said "Thank you for all the free books you gave us. I didn't have many books before, but now I do. Thanks for all the books because I like to read, and now I read to my mother every day."

Bill is also a charter member of the Kiwanis Club of Ashland. A past club president, he has 36 years of perfect attendance. Bill was instrumental in the Kiwanis Club implementing the Bringing Up Grades (BUG) program in three local elementary schools. He has served as chairman of the BUG program for four years. The BUG program has reached more than 700 students at three elementary schools. His years of service with the Kiwanis Club inspired the creation of the Bill Burch Scholarship, offered yearly to a Key Club member at Boyd County High School.



For the past 10 years, Bill has been the advisor to the Boyd County Branch of the Kentucky Youth Council for Volunteer Service, a group of Boyd County high school students, interested in volunteerism, from five school

districts. Through school assemblies, the council has promoted volunteerism to over 4,000 students, parents, teachers and principals from 15 elementary schools. Under his leadership, council members have logged over 40,000 volunteer hours. The Council publishes a Boyd County Youth Opportunity Directory that identifies opportunities for service, research and leadership.

In 2010, Bill received the national Presidential Volunteer Service Award for logging more than 4,000 cumulative hours of volunteer service over his lifetime.



Bill is also involved in various ways with the following groups: Ashland Area YMCA, Boyd and Greenup County Champions Coalition, Boyd County Community of Promise, Boyd County Assets Development Board, Boyd County High School Youth Services Advisory Board, Boyd County Family Resource Center West Advisory Council, Ashland Area Education Grants committee, Boyd County Community Education advisory council, First Baptist Church of Ashland and Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels.

He has been married to Mary for 46 years and the couple have one daughter, Beth.

"The people who I see in life that are the happiest, the most fulfilled, and have a sparkle in their eyes are those how have a huge component of service in their lives and in some form or fashion give to other people besides themselves."

~ Paul Tudor Jones

Presenter Biographies



Jane Beshear, First Lady of Kentucky, has dedicated her life to the service of others throughout the Commonwealth. As a life-long equine enthusiast and advocate, she has served on the board of directors of Equestrian Events Inc.

As First Lady, Mrs. Beshear is dedicated to addressing the rampant spread of breast cancer, which is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among women in Kentucky.

Her Horses and Hope initiative is increasing breast cancer awareness, education, screening and treatment referral among Kentucky's horse industry workers and their families. Mrs. Beshear also hosts breast cancer survivors from across the Commonwealth at the Annual Celebration of Hope Luncheon each May.

As a former teacher, Mrs. Beshear is passionate about education. To tackle the school dropout problem in the Commonwealth, she organized Graduate Kentucky: A Community Approach. Focusing on drop-out prevention and increasing graduation rates in Kentucky public schools, this program has held summits across the state to gather ideas toward ensuring that students of all ages are given every opportunity to succeed. She has also pushed for legislation to raise the drop out age for high school students in Kentucky.

In 2009, Mrs. Beshear launched the Governor's Garden effort to increase awareness about the benefits of locally grown produce and reducing our carbon footprint. She also strives to make Kentucky more energy efficient through www.GreenTeam.ky.gov, a program that promotes sustainability, energy efficiency and environmental preservation.

Mrs. Beshear is a longtime volunteer board member of many local and state civic organizations, including the Kentucky Commission on Women, Generations United Seniors4Kids and Recovery Kentucky program.

Every year, she hosts the Shop and Share program, which collects donated goods from Kroger stores across the state to benefit Kentucky Domestic Violence Association shelters.

Mrs. Beshear's motto is "Personal Responsibility." She has received numerous awards reflecting her active pursuit to lead by example and her commitment to serving Kentuckians.



Janie Miller was appointed secretary of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services by Gov. Steve Beshear in January 2008.

Miller brings more than 30 years of experience to the position, including 21 years developing and administering health care programs. Her career also includes more than 15 years of service in the former state Cabinet for Human Resources.

Prior to her appointment as secretary, Miller held the position of deputy director of budget review for the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission. In this role, she was responsible for assisting legislators in developing budget bills for all three branches of government.

Under Governor Paul Patton, Miller served as Public Protection Cabinet Secretary from May 2002 to November 2003, continuing in the role of commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Insurance while serving as cabinet secretary. She also has served as commissioner of the Department of Insurance and as deputy commissioner of Health Insurance in the Department of Insurance.

Miller has an undergraduate degree in social work from Eastern Kentucky University.



Colmon Elridge III was appointed Executive Assistant to Governor Steve Beshear in December 2007.

Colmon is from Cynthiana and attended Transylvania University, receiving his degree in history. He began his master's program at Eastern Kentucky University and received his master's degree in Business Administration at Sullivan University.

As Executive Assistant to Governor Beshear, Colmon has been truly engaged in carrying forward the Governor's agenda for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. From improving access to health insurance for children through KCHIP, to improving our graduation rate through the Graduate Kentucky initiative, to assisting in the oversight of the day-to-day operations of the Office of the Governor, Colmon has served the people of the Commonwealth with a dedication to Governor Beshear's vision that every Kentuckian know the power of opportunity, the value of honest work and the promise of success.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

~ Margaret Mead

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Cover photo courtesy of Shannon Ramsey



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